

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

| AREA | FORM NO. |
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| H | 380 |



n Lexington

ress 17 Meriam Street

toric Name Church of Our Redeemer

Church: St. Nicholas
Present Greek Orthodox Church
Original Church of Our Redeemer, Episcopal

DESCRIPTION:

ce 1886

Source Hudson, I, p. xviii

Style Shingle Style with Gothic elements

Architect E.A.P. Newcomb *(Edward Reed - 1910 add.)*

Exterior wall fabric shingles

Outbuildings

Major alterations (with dates) sidewalls
extended outward, one-story addition to
the facade (dates unknown); parish house
added to left (1910)
1954- loss of steeple; date? - comm. chr.

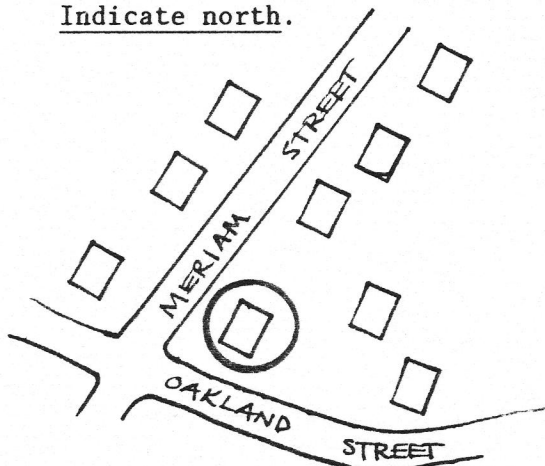
Moved Date

Approx. acreage 12500 ft.²

Setting Corner at the foot of Meriam
Hill; residential streets developed in
the 1880s and 1890s primarily.

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.



Recorded by Anne Grady

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date March, 1984

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

This small church is a creative blend of Shingle and Gothic Revival styles. Notable features are the carved wooden tracery in the stained glass windows and the treatment of the gable where half-timbering and a hood surround a larger window with tracery. Set forward from the facade and supporting the hood (originally the base of a spire) is a carved wooden cross. Although there are several other churches with Gothic elements in Lexington, the carved tracery and design of this church are unique. Fortunately, the windows were

(see Continuation Sheet)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

The Episcopal Parish in Lexington was incorporated on October 15, 1885. The church was built within a year. E.L. McNamara received the contract for stonework and "Witcher and Muzzy" supplied the frame. In 1954 the spire of the building blew off during hurricane Carol and landed upside down in the front yard with the tip lodged in the ground. A startling photograph of the event was widely published (see attachment).

In 1957 the Episcopal congregation moved to larger quarters on the north side of Meriam Street and the Greek Orthodox congregation purchased the building.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

Hudson, Charles. History of the Town of Lexington, revised and continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society, Volume I, pp. 374-376. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913.

Lexington Minute Man, November 13, 1885, January 15, 1886, September 9, 1954.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Lexington

Form No:

380

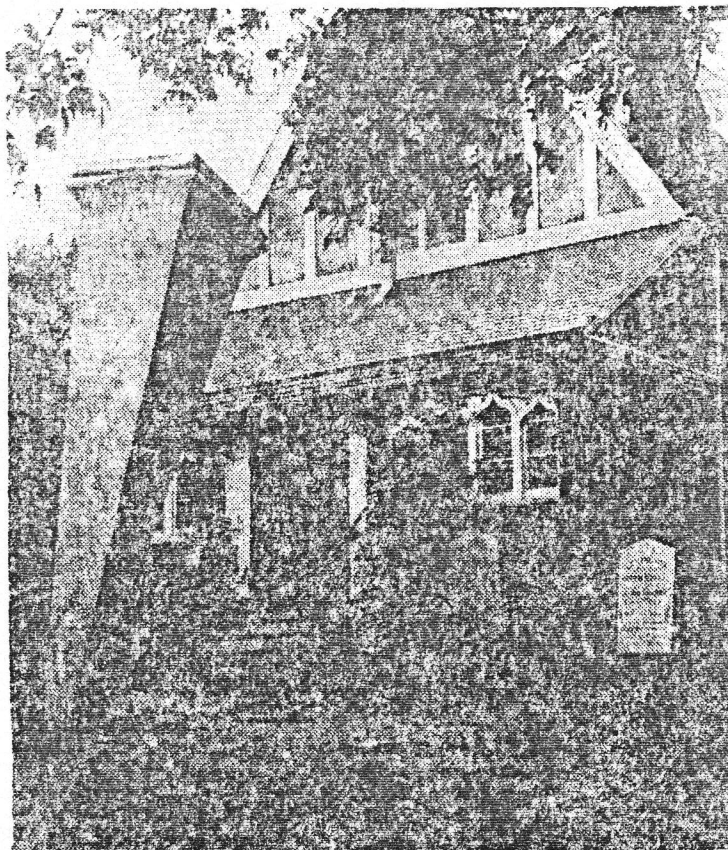
Property Name: Church of Our Redeemer

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

reused when the sidewalls of the church were extended outward 10 feet or so. The one-story, shed-roofed portion of the front of the church was originally an open porch. The current windows in this portion were made from the original openwork tracery on the porch. There is a large addition to the left rear.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1954



HURRICANE HALLMARK — Hurricane Carol which hit town Tuesday, Aug. 31, performed this spectacular stunt with the steeple of the Church of Our Redeemer at the corner of Meriam and Oakland streets. Many residents missed this sight as the steeple was quickly cleared away last Tuesday afternoon. Without doubt this is the best of the hurricane pictures. (Zitso Studio)

(Unidentified clipping)

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town
LEXINGTON

Property Address
17 MERIAM ST.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

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| H | 380 |
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ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The architect of the church was Edgar Allan Poe Newcomb (1846-1916), son of another Boston architect, Levi Newcomb. E.A.P. Newcomb was a partner in the firm of Levi Newcomb from 1866 to 1876 and headed the firm from 1876 until 1901 when he moved to Honolulu, Hawaii. Among the younger Newcomb's known designs are a number of residential commissions in the Back Bay, the First Baptist Church in Haverhill, the Frank Carpenter House in Manchester, NH, the George Tower House in St. Louis, Missouri, the high altar in Albany Cathedral, Albany, New York and a number of buildings in Honolulu. In addition to his architectural works, Newcomb was a writer of some note and wrote a number of poems which were set to music and an opera "The Maid of Marblehead".

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The lot of land for the church at the corner of Oakland and Meriam Streets was purchased in October 1884. On October 15, 1885 the parish was officially incorporated and Messrs. Robbins, Griffiths, Clarke, Lawrence, and Jackson were elected a building committee. Plans for the church building were drawn by E.A.P. Newcomb of Boston. The first services were held in the church on June 24, 1886.

In 1910 the parish house addition was constructed. The new structure joined the church at right angles on the rear on the north side and measured roughly 54' x 27'. The architect for the addition was Edward Reed of Lexington, a communicant of the parish. Reed had graduated from Harvard in 1908 with a degree in architecture (see also 50 Percy Road). John McKay was the contractor and builder (Hudson, vol. 1, p. 375-6; *Minute-man*, July 16, 1910).

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Hudson, Charles. *History of the Town of Lexington*, revised and continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913.
Lexington Directories, various dates.
Lexington Minute-Man, July 16, 1910.
Massachusetts Historical Commission, MACRIS data base.
Middlesex County Register of Deeds, Cambridge, Mass.
Sheppard, Susan. National Register Nomination for George Tower, Jr. House, St. Louis, Missouri, 2005.
U.S. Census Records, 1900-1930.
<http://awt.ancestrylibrary.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=andrewsgd&id=I86369&ti=5542> (Information on E.A.P. Newcomb)

Supplement prepared by:
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June 2009